

Our County
D. Gary Davis
County Mayor

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SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH. Southeast Region Will Hold Facebook Live Event September 29th at 8 PM

Our County, region, and our entire nation has undergone a tremendous amount of change in the past 6 months. The changes that have been experienced by all of us are continuing to reach new levels of impacting our daily lives and routines. We are ALL social beings who need, and yes, depend, on the interactions with each other. The isolation that has now been imposed to help “reduce the curve” and limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus has helped in one way and also been very detrimental in others. September has been the month of Suicide Prevention Awareness in the past and this year the emphasis has become even more critical. To reach even more people, those who devote their time and talent to help others in this situation have “gone digital” and have developed a new approach for this year’s program that will occur next Tuesday evening. I have included a portion of the State of Tennessee’s press release for this worthy cause to help those within Bradley County and our region!

The southeast region of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) will hold a virtual event on the evening of September 29th to recognize Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

According to an [August 2020 poll](#), more than half of adults know someone who has had suicidal thoughts or behaviors, and approximately one in five U.S. adults has thought about suicide. In Tennessee, an average of 3 people die by suicide each day. In 2018 – the latest year for which state-specific figures are available – there were 1,159 recorded suicide deaths in Tennessee. Of these deaths, 118 were in the southeast Tennessee region.

In many cases, suicide can be traced to unrecognized, untreated, or poorly treated mental illness. It can happen to people of any gender, race or ethnicity, and any economic status. The average suicide death leaves behind six close family and friends,

in addition to impacting others in the community. A major aim of TSPN is to educate community members on the warning signs and risk factors specific to suicide, as well as share resources so individuals can seek help for those in their lives.

TSPN draws awareness to suicide throughout the year and these efforts are recognized during a statewide event and many regional events each September. The southeast Tennessee suicide prevention awareness event will be held virtually on September 29th from 8 to 9 pm eastern time. The event can be streamed live via the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network Facebook page.

This event will celebrate work done in the southeast Tennessee region over the past year, highlight stories and voices of suicide prevention in the region, and recognize the southeast regional suicide prevention award winner, Christy Sentell, an individual who has dedicated herself to suicide prevention in our region.

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) is the statewide public-private organization responsible for implementing the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention. TSPN and its volunteers work across the state to organize activities & projects promoting suicide prevention awareness, providing suicide prevention & crisis intervention training to community organizations, and conducting postvention sessions for schools & organizations after suicides occur.

To learn even more about the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, please visit tspn.org. If you would like to be involved in TSPN's southeast region, please e-mail rgearinger@tspn.org. If you or someone you know is in a mental health crisis, please reach out to the statewide crisis line at 1-855-CRISIS-1.

As we continue to remember to wash our hands or use sanitizer, keep the 6 ft. rule, avoid large gatherings, and wear a mask when around other people. Let's all do our part to also care about others. We truly never know what the person next to us is "going through" and being kind and also caring about each other helps more than we will ever know. Those who continue to do so are indeed our everyday heroes across our community and help to keep Bradley County, Tennessee at its best!